

Dillon Resource Management Plan ID Team Meeting

**October 21, 2002
1:00 to 4:30 p.m.**

Attendees: Renee Johnson, Jeff Daugherty, Laurie Blinn, Huey Long, Brian Hockett, Jim Roscoe, Rob Van Deren, Andrea Wiggins, Joe Casey, John Simons, Paul Hutchinson, Mark Sant, Steve Armiger, Bob Gunderson, Brad Gillespie, Lynn Anderson, Tim Bozorth, Rick Waldrup, Joan Trent

The agenda was passed out to the ID team.

Where We Are/Extension

Renee and Tim had a conference call with several Montana State Office (MSO) and Washington Office (WO) staff this morning in regard to the request for an extension to accommodate the proposal initiated by Beaverhead County for a release of information prior to the Draft RMP/EIS (called the Digest) and additional meetings to get alternative development ideas. The Montana Congressionals have sent several letters in support of the extension request. The WO is concerned about adding a lot of time onto the schedule—especially anything that changes the Record of Decision (ROD) date (scheduled for 2005). They would like us to be able to complete the Digest release and additional public involvement in a shorter timeframe. The WO did agree that we should spend our time this week working on focus questions, assuming we will get some sort of extension, though possibly abbreviated. The focus questions would be included in the Digest release and used to guide additional public involvement. The goal is to have the focus questions finished by the end of this week, so that we can send them to the MSO for review.

Agenda Review

The ID team reviewed the agenda. Goals for the meeting were as follows:

- Finish draft focus questions
- Finish discussion for issues outside scope
- Go over travel workplan and other alternative development workplans

Planning Issues/Focus Questions

To reacquaint everyone with where we are in the planning process, Renee presented the ID Team with a brief history of what had been done to date. The Dillon FO published a Notice of Intent in August 2001 and held scoping meetings in the fall to get the public involved in the process. As a result of the scoping meetings, we received about 200 written letters and emails commenting on what we should consider in the RMP, what people's concerns were, etc. Joan Trent did a content analysis of the scoping comments and prepared a Summary Scoping Report based on the analysis. A copy of this report is on the shared directory and the website.

The information from scoping was used to refine the major planning issues that will be drivers of the RMP. The core team identified and wordsmithed eight broad planning issues at their February 2002 meeting. When developing the planning issues, the core team considered including land tenure adjustment as an issue, but decided that it wouldn't be a driving issue for the plan, but will be addressed as part of the land use plan requirements. The eight issues will drive the formulation of alternatives.

The team had some discussion about whether the issues should be used to develop focus questions, or if questions should be developed for each identified resource or program area. Because the issues are drivers for alternatives, it was agreed the focus questions would be developed underneath the issues.

The team worked on developing draft focus questions for the rest of the day. The focus questions will be included along with the Digest information to prepare the public for the alternative development workshops. Beaverhead and Madison Counties and the Montana Consensus Council will convene these public forums/workshops early next year and facilitate workgroups to identify responses to focus questions. Responses to the focus questions will be provided back to the BLM for the planning team to use as alternatives are developed.

Extension Update

After further discussion with the WO throughout the day, Tim let the planning team know at the end of the day that it appeared the request for a six-month extension would be approved.

October 22, 2002

8:00 to 4:30 p.m.

The team continued to work on focus questions for the eight issues. The group then discussed some of the items identified during scoping that appear to be outside the scope of the plan.

Issues Beyond Scope/Not Addressed by RMP

Anticipated issues outside the scope or issues that will not be addressed in the RMP were listed on a flipchart for the team's review. The team discussed these issues and made comments, which are represented in the following table:

Issue	Comments
Wildlife Numbers Catch and Release Regulations Other FWP-related Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The BLM manages habitat, not populations. • The RMP will not set numbers or regulate fishing and hunting. <p>A discussion came up about BLM closing public lands in Phillips County to hunting; the thought was that this was a firearms restriction, not a hunting closure. Our planning criteria indicate we recognize State of Montana authority to regulate hunting and fishing.</p> <p>There may be some RMP decisions that will have secondary effects on some of these items.</p>
Management Paradigms and Concepts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of environmentalism • Island biogeography 	The range of alternatives will address many of the principles contained in the philosophical contexts mentioned in scoping. However, the plan will not address specific paradigms.
Disease	Livestock health is addressed in the grazing regulations. BLM already has the authority to require certain health stipulations for domestic

Issue	Comments
	livestock on public lands. We acknowledge that there may be indirect effects to be discussed in the impact analysis. Evidence of transmission of disease between livestock and wildlife is uncertain.
Suitability of Grazing	The RMP will identify what lands are available and not available (per Appendix C guidance). This is not necessarily the same thing as “suitability”. Suitability is used to establish forage allocations. The MFP identified “suitability” based on forage calculations/allocations. In the MFP, slope was often used to call something “unsuitable”. We need to make a distinction between “available” and “suitable”. One thought is lands are available as long as standards are being met, and that suitability should tie to Standards and Guidelines assessments. An example of a concern with this approach is that in allotment evaluations, there is sometimes habitat (for example, steep slopes above riparian habitat) that is not being used but in the allocation. Agreement on how to approach this was not reached and additional discussion with Tim will have to occur.
Diversion of Resources to Firefighting	This is an administrative issue and won’t be addressed in the RMP. The approved plan will have an implementation plan and will help us address budget needs and priorities.
Rural Cleansing	Social and economic impacts will be addressed in the RMP and comply with Environmental Justice requirements. The BLM will consider all comments and is not favoring any particular interests. Some folks felt this particular topic isn’t linked directly with resource issues and the types of decisions we make in land use plans.
Maintenance of Irrigated Habitat	There is very limited irrigated habitat on public lands. Thus, this is not a major driver. Water rights are outside of the BLM’s jurisdiction.
Management indicator species/keystone species/key indicator/umbrella species/key wildlife	We will identify priority species and habitats in the RMP. BLM’s regulations don’t include identifying management indicator species, although other agencies do (Forest Service). Keystone species—provides other habitat
Do away with Wilderness Study Areas	We can’t release WSAs—Congress must act. The RMP will address how public lands in WSAs would be managed if they were released.

The team had a conference call set up with Tim Bozorth (who had to depart for Billings earlier) to talk about any concerns with the above issues. The team's only point of disagreement was with the issue

regarding grazing suitability. After discussing this issue for a while, it was agreed that we need to distinguish between the terms “available” and “suitable”. Tim will do some follow up with staff at the MSO and discuss this issue further to determine the best approach.

October 23, 2002

8:00 to 4:30 p.m.

The team continued to work on focus questions for the eight issues. After finishing the focus questions, the team referred to categories that they had started with to ensure the focus questions would result in suggestions related to the categories of 1) “tools” to incorporate into a “toolkit”, 2) alternative themes, 3) proposed solutions, 4) acceptable tradeoffs/impacts 5) area specific suggestions. Everyone agreed that the draft questions, if answered, would provide information that could fit into these categories. The team agreed to ask a question regarding alternative themes. The team also came up with a few miscellaneous focus questions that they felt would provide useful input if answered.

Input received from the public meetings will be compiled by the County/Montana Consensus Council and provided to BLM in three categories:

- Responses/Answers to Focus Questions by Issue
- Comments on Chapter 3
- Suggestions on Alternative Themes

Travel Workplan

Tim, Rich Maggio, Renee, and Rick met last week and discussed a strategy to start working on the travel issue and identified steps to begin pulling together the travel management portion of the plan. Renee and Rick gave a brief overview of the discussions and how this work would be done. The following items need to be completed:

Step 1 By November 15th.

Identify County and FS roads that should be open across BLM.

(Requested information from Beaverhead County by November 8.)

Bob Gunderson will coordinate with Rob McCullough, RAC member regarding access to historic mining districts. Bob will have this information ready by November 8.

Step 2 By December 2nd.

Work with a small workgroup to conduct “First Screen” to tweak RAC map.

“First Screen” changes must be big, blatant, direct, distinct concerns.

The intent is to adhere to the spirit of the work done by the subgroup.

Any concerns on part of staff specialists to Rick by December 2nd also.

Step 3 By January 17th, 2003.

Finalize “baseline map” in review with ID team.

Baseline map used as preferred alternative.

As the rest of the alternatives are developed, this baseline map will change across other alternatives resulting from other proposals in the alternatives.

A travel workgroup (comprised of Rick, Chris/Rich, Jim, and Rob) was formed to do additional work on the travel issue. Rick will lead this team.

The RMP will need to be able to display for each of the alternatives the following quantitative information:

Current Travel (No Action)	Baseline RAC Alternative	Other Alternative	Other Alternative	Other Alternative
< > Acres of BLM Open/Closed/Limited	_____		_____	_____➔
< > Miles of Road Across BLM Open/Closed/Limited	_____		_____	_____➔

Renee briefly went over some of the other travel considerations that Tim, Rich, she and Rick discussed last week and quickly reviewed with the team the exceptions/allowances identified in the FS/BLM Montana/Dakotas Statewide OHV/EIS.

Other Travel Considerations

- Snowmobiles—Because of lack of snow cover, and only a few places on BLM where this is an issue, the current Travel Plan will probably be used as the base. We will look at changes if warranted across other alternatives.
- OHV EIS Exceptions—Exceptions would be carried into the Preferred Alternative. This would be to try and retain some consistency with other BLM lands in Montana and with the Forest Service. Again, perhaps other alternatives might consider changes.
- Do not intend to address “splitting” of non-motorized use unless a critical need.
- Will take specific suggestions of routes suitable for certain types of motorized use.
- Need to develop narrative criteria that would be considered to close a road.
- Narrative explaining how/where/how much construction of new roads would be allowed or not.

Montana/Dakotas Statewide OHV EIS Exceptions

- Allow limited motorized cross-country travel for management of resources by agency personnel, permittees, leases, and other government entities.
(Examples for BLM: noxious weed control, prescribed fire, revegetation survey, etc.)
(Examples for other agencies—same examples, get authority from Field Manager or MOU, etc.)
(Examples for personal groups with permit/lease/etc—monitoring, maintenance, repair, fences, wells, doing research, etc.)
- Allow cross-country travel for military, fire, search and rescue, and law enforcement for emergency purposes.
- Allow dispersed camping within 300 feet of road.

- No game retrieval

There was a discussion about legal access versus actual access. How this will be addressed was still not resolved by the discussions. However, the map developed for the RMP will identify roads/trails that would be designated open/limited whether or not there is legal access. The travel maps will have to wrestle with the issue about whether to show only roads where legal access is available or to show where access isn't prohibited even though there may not be an easement, etc.

Small Group Workplan Proposal

The team reviewed a small group workplan proposal to initiate alternative development that Renee drafted. The proposal contained the following elements that would use smaller task groups to develop/brainstorm options and review all the information the team has available and report back to the larger planning team with recommendations:

- Each workgroup would have an assigned leader to coordinate work times and come back to full ID team with proposals.
- These groups would consist of no more than 3-4 people.
- Groups would refer to Appendix C guidance, scoping comments, and MSA information as well as personal knowledge for their topics/issues to develop options.
- Groups would focus on an issue or topic and try to give some basic structure to some options to be considered. Focus on problems and areas where change is needed.
- Groups would brainstorm varying objectives/management actions/protocols to resolve problems within the issue statements as well as meeting the Appendix C requirements.
- Groups would identify associated pros and cons with options.
- Groups would operate between now and March 1, 2003 while additional public involvement is going on.
- Groups would take input provided from County/MCC public sessions and work suggestions into the options to be presented to the ID team.

It was recognized there would need to be "infill" for some non-issues or minor topics.

Concern was expressed by some staff who felt they would be stretched thin to be involved in too many small workgroups. The suggestion was made to have "topic" meetings instead to do the same thing. Another option was to do the same thing using the core team instead of various workgroups. After discussing the proposal, the team decided to have topic workdays instead of using the small group workplan. The first topic workday will be on the afternoon of November 18 where the concept will be tried and evaluated.

Agenda Items for November and December

Week of November 18

- 18 Topic Meeting "Experiment"
- 19 GCDB (Geographic Coordinate Database) Presentation
- 20-21 Vegetation Group (2 of these days)

Week of December 2

- Review of Chapters 1 and 3
- Look at travel tweaks

Beaverhead County Concerns with Native/Natural

Beaverhead County has raised a concern about the various definitions of the terms “native” and “natural”. The concern was that there currently is no time-period defined for native and natural, and the two words seem to be used interchangeably.

Natural

The ID Team discussed this issue and determined that for the purposes of the RMP, “natural” will be used to describe conditions existing just pre-1860’s based on tree ring data showing the bulk of “disturbances” within our current climate occurs after that time period. This is more completely discussed in some of the landscape analysis documents (Gravellys/Pioneers). We acknowledge that there were disturbances/modifications prior to this date, but the data shows this as the big “burp”. We will use the same definition as discussed in the landscape analysis documents.

Native

The team felt we could easily provide a definition for “native”. One option is to default to USDA/NRCS definition.

**October 24, 2002
8:00 to 10:45 a.m.**

Metadata Assignments/ArcGIS Training

The team reviewed the metadata worksheet to be used to document the process for creating GIS coverages. Specialists need to fill out a metadata worksheet for all GIS coverages used in the RMP. Metadata worksheets are due to Laurie by November 29. The team reviewed an example of how to fill out a metadata worksheet. An example worksheet and a blank metadata worksheet are on the shared directory. After reviewing the worksheet, Laurie displayed several ArcView coverages for the team to look at.

ArcGIS training will be held in the large conference room on November 6-8. Shelley Johnson and Donna Degner from the MSO will conduct the training. Renee identified who was on the list to take the training.

Important Dates

The team reviewed the following list of assignments and due dates:

Task	Assigned To	By When
ACEC Information Report	Mark G., Andrea	November
ArcGIS Training		11/6-8/02
Beaverhead County Roads	Rob (coordinating with County Commissioners)	11/8/02
Access to Historic Mining Districts	Bob (coordinating with Rob McCullough)	11/15/02

Task	Assigned To	By When
Chapters 1 & 3 Edits Made and Sections Collated	Andrea	11/15/02
FS System Roads & County Roads shown as open across BLM	Rick, Chris/Rich, Jim, Rob	11/15/02
ID Team Meeting	Everyone	11/18-22/02
Metadata Due to Laurie	Everyone	11/29/02
Review of Chapters 1 & 3	Everyone	12/2/02
Review of Travel Baseline Maps	Rick, Chris/Rich, Jim, Rob	12/2/02
ID Team Meeting	Everyone	12/2-6/02
ID Team Meeting	Everyone	1/13-17/03
Baseline Travel Map Done	Rick	1/17/03

These dates are posted on the reminder board outside the mail room door.